

July 13, 2011

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board

Present: Christina Bollo, Jon Morgan, Betty Ahrens, Seth Schromen-Wawrin, Greg Brey, Mark Landreaneau, Devor Barton, Jen Calleja, Jacob Struiksma, Kristen Lohse, Mike Cechlala, Kristen Lohse

Absent: Katherine MacKinnon

SDOT staff liaison: Brian Dougherty

Public Attendees: Victor Stover, Jody Connelly (SBAB)

Introduction

With Kristen leaving for Bridging the Gap and with no secretary, SPAB has a leadership vacuum: Please email Christina and Brian about interest in becoming Secretary and Vice-Chair.

The April and May meeting minutes have been approved.

Individual Reports

Jen - attended 35th Ave SW mtg

Betty - Lake Union Park walk, impressed with walkability

Christina - 35th Ave SW (near SW Juneau) walk through with Tom Rasmussen. Councilmember seems to be engaged now. Ped. Board should write a letter.

Devor - out of town, missed SBAB meeting

Kristen - CTAC III recommendations coming. 15th Ave NE construction, first phase done, looks great, second phase underway.

Greg - tried to attend Metro meeting, couldn't get in - huge response, only 4 councilmembers there, all representing Seattle.

Jon - Capitol Hill Community Council received grant to study ped. safety on 12th Avenue between Madison and Roy.

Question about publicly accessible cut throughs in downtown buildings - taking you from 2nd Avenue to 5th Avenue, for example - are there others? Jody Connelly from SBAB responded that there is a downtown accessible map on Metro's website.

Mark - we should be proud to live in Seattle. Minnesotan friend who visiting was out of breath because of the hills. Was also at Metro public meeting, also disappointed there was no

suburban council representation. Councils voting on the 25th, if it doesn't pass then it goes to public vote. \$20 doesn't seem like too much.

Jacob moved to Roosevelt. Went to hearing in Kirkland for Metro, got a chance to speak for a longer time. Went to FeetFirst walk in Ravenna.

Announcements

Christina announced that she will also be leaving board to begin a PhD program next fall. We will be bringing on two new members who were chosen as alternates during the last interview cycle.

As a reminder, Kristen will leaving to serve on BTG as a citizen member

Last months' meeting minutes will be reforwarded.

Jon has expressed interest, will serve as acting chair for now.

Motion for elections tonight put forth by Seth, seconded by Jacob: Jon nominated as chair. Ayes have it.

Elections are traditionally in November. Brian would like the Chair to serve a year.

Waterfront Seattle

Hannah McIntosh and Steve Pearce

Project is headed up by SDOT, but also involves two other department: DPD (Marshall Foster, and Parks (Nathan Torgelson).

Project has a new name, was previously Seattle Central Waterfront.

Project area is 26 city blocks, from Stadium District to Sculpture Park. Core project area -King Street to entrance of Battery Street tunnel - area that becomes free when viaduct is demolished. Other project areas are included because they relate, but are not necessarily part of the viaduct footprint.

Railroad right of way, Pier 48, Waterfront Park, Pier 62-63, north Alaskan Way are all included. East-west connections are important, project wants to improve connections to this area.

Very southern end of State owned, but Alaskan Way/Viaduct is city property.

Timeline:

- Concept design and frame work plan now until mid-2012
- 2015 - new tunnel opens
- 2016 - viaduct demolished, public space and new roadway to be built
- 2012-2015 - some opportunities for projects that can be done now

- Elliot Bay Seawall Project- 2013 construction, design now

Guiding principles:

- waterfront for all
- connection
- access and mobility
- bold vision

Central Waterfront Committee, additional oversight body, 35 people in high level holistic oversight.

Design, public engagement, financing, programming, etc.

Framework design and concept design process are underway now.

Seawall is public safety risk, accelerated schedule so early design work to coordinate with it make the project fit into the larger context.

Access, public art, accessibility are all important. The framework design to be done mid-2012, and the project will be at 20% design + cost estimate + financing strategy.

There is a new project website.

Public outreach so far: 3 public meetings. Design finalists last September, 1400 in attendance. James Corner Field Operations selected. Another meeting in Feb. at Aquarium, 1000 attendees. Also conducted an online survey with pretty high response.

Most common responses: opportunities to touch water, views, parks and open spaces. Most common “no”: too much hardscape, parking and roads, tall buildings.

Public also expressed interest in parks, places to stroll, concerts, eating, pathways, diverse experiences.

Second public meeting in May at Bell Harbor. Early design concepts introduced: 3 concept, 3 scales.

City scale - Elliott Bay, Recentering the city around the Bay

- Opportunities and destinations, existing and new, with improved links between
- Open Spaces system in City - Olmsted open space system
- connection existing system to Elliott Bay

2nd Scale: Central Waterfront, Framework Scale

- Making connection with neighborhood adjacent to waterfront
- unique qualities, destinations

- Lots of energy making waterfront accessible
- ped connections, transit, parking, access
- Transit: 1st Ave will be the front door to the waterfront, significant transit investment to be made, such as a streetcar or trolleybus that would be frequent and accessible
- Alaskan Way -transit that fits in to overall design that doesn't take up too much space, something sustainable
- "Moving sidewalk" concept - easy to get on & off
- Main transit service would be 1st and 3rd, so connections to need improvement
- Topography is a challenge, focus on improving existing streets, using landscape elements to provide grade transition and perhaps hill climb/mechanical assists
- Colman dock - new wider bridge to replace Marion street ped bridge is planned, as well as another bridge at Yesler to provide connection to Light Rail
- Street on waterfront to provide access to and through downtown, esp. to NW seattle, also to accommodate freight, because tunnel does not provide downtown access
- Intersections would be marked boldly to make it clear about the volume of pedestrians
- 30 mph speed limit, will operate like other downtown streets
- North-south travel - opportunities for promenade for pedestrians, but new sidewalk on east side of street
- Alaskan Way now is a "rough edge"

Question: What about Waterfront Streetcar?

Currently not running, can't come back until 2018. Challenge: cannot run in mixed traffic - need separate right of way (ROW). Off-street bike facility to the west in a separate ROW -- too much of ROW taken up by transportation.

Waterfront Scale

- "Tidelines and Folds" theme: shoreline moved out over time, tides coming and going, topographic transitions - idea to mark these in design
- Sectional profiles: terraces, steps, overlooks
- Transition concepts: terraces, gravel beach, garden stairs, canopy/covered areas for weather protection
- Landform Folds
- Major landscape elements, like at Sculpture Park
- Transitions to waterfront, new public spaces, opportunities for new uses
- Biggest & most dramatic example - connecting Victor Steinbrueck Park, connection over street to waterfront, Pier 61, 62, connection back to Pike Street hillclimb
- "Belltown Balcony" - current entrance to Battery Street tunnel - reuse of portal site, at-grade access from 1st Ave, takes advantage of significant viewpoints
- Possible new uses under, such as the community center
- Major new space at Colman Dock
- Bridges at Yesler Way and Marion Street
- Covered area with glass roof
- Detail along edge, active space
- Ferry Park Sun Lawn - ferries are an exciting element to people- capitalize on interest,

gets people closer. Dock gets 5 million pedestrians a year. Working with other departments doing multi-modal hub at Colman Dock.

- New east west transit route to connect to First Hill - goal to provide direct connection from Colman Dock to First Hill - as in a trolley bus connection
- Jon suggests the importance of wayfinding signage
- 9 block gap - Virginia to Spring
- Union Street makes sense of a connection, existing ROW from Alaskan to 1st Ave
- Funicular at Pike Place Market
- Seneca Street is another opportunity
- Improving connections up hill and making them easier to find, elevators not well-marked now
- Opportunities to celebrate history? lots of similar feedback
- What is it that ties everything together - history or sustainability and habitat or a combination of the both?
- both tie into Tidelines theme

Upcoming Transit Revisions

Christina O'Claire from Metro

Financial Situation: how did we get here, what can be done?

2nd of 3 public hearings re: Congestion Reduction, over 1,000 people attended

KC Council overwhelmed, Metro welcomes input

Two pieces of legislation:

Congestion reduction fee is councilmanic: \$20 VLF to help fund transit gap with congestion relief fund plan, 2-year temporary measure

If not funded, will cut 17%

60% of Metro's revenue from sales tax, very volatile, 20% decrease in recent years

Internal review - what can be done?

- Raise fares (fares = 20% of total costs)
- Audit/efficiencies
- Deferred future investments
- Lay offs, freeze COLAs

\$60 mil. gap:

- Reduce service by 600,000 hours (equiv. to weekend service) = 9 million trips
- 80% of Metro commuters will be affected
- Will increase driving - 15,000 more cars estimated to be on roads
- 4 out of 5 people will be affected

Congestion relief is only for 2 years

Regional transit committee plan allocation and planning

New format looking at productivity of system

100,000 hours to be cut in Feb. if fee is not implemented

Result will be not just cutting but restructuring

For example, service between downtown and U District - currently serving Link marker with buses

Please contact your councilmembers

New guidelines either way will affect how we do new service planning

Jon: If it does pass, with new task force, how will service changes happen?

Christina: Changes would not happen as quickly, not in Feb.

Give us a sense, comparison?

Answer: 600,000 hours lost - comparison/magnitude

How many hours reallocated with Link openings in the future?

Not able to provide that now, new service planning model will

Greg- how were cuts identified?

Christina: productivity, social equity, geographic distribution

Mark: How to west and east service compare now?

Christina: Seattle = 60%

Concerned about Rt #43, but keep #49

Lots of question about 43 - not considered as productive, overlaps with other routes

1st 100,000 hours have been selected, next 500,000 hours to done with more public input

Seth: Thinks handout looks like propaganda

Christina: Metro is reducing redundancies AND cutting service

Seattle service represents about half of the 17%, but most would be restructures

300,000 hours in Seattle

New strategic plan is good opportunity, despite the dire funding picture

Requires annual reporting, so system will be more flexible

First 100,000 hours are low-hanging fruit: a walkable community served by transportation that's walkable

Executive is actively working to get all councilmembers on board. Another meeting in Burien next week. Please contact councilmembers! Letter from whole board would be appreciated.

Greg will draft, Mike will help edit, distribute to whole group

Need to do ASAP - next 12 days

We need to focus on swaying vote of suburban councilmembers, and focus on connecting walking trip to transit to walking trips - a regional planning perspective

Next Month:

Field trip - will keep you posted on field trip.

Will try to keep evening meeting time so if Lighthouse doesn't work we'll get another venue.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm

Next meeting August 10, 2011